

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 5234

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring establishment of a coordinated, evidence-based credit policy regarding AP exams.

Sponsors: Senators Mullet, Palumbo, Rivers, Lias, Wilson and Kuderer.

Senate Committee on Higher Education
House Committee on Higher Education

Background: AP exams allow high school students to earn college credits and skip introductory college classes if the student achieves a minimum score required by an institution of higher learning. Students in grades 9, 10, 11 or 12 may enroll in high school courses taught by high school teachers, using college level curricula, which is approved by the College Board through a syllabi review process. Students pay a \$91 fee to take an optional, final, standardized exam. The fee may be higher if the high school adds administrative costs to the fee. Some districts absorb the cost of the exam fee. Fee waivers, subsidized through a combination of state and federal funds, have historically been available for low-income students—reduced rate is \$15; federal funds may no longer be available as a result of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the restructuring of federal grants. Once a student is enrolled, the AP course is indicated on the high school transcript. It does not appear on the college transcript until and unless the college awards credit, based on the exam score. In Washington, 346 schools in 186 districts are offering AP programs.

Each college and university makes its own decisions about awarding credit and placement. Most institutions have a written policy that informs prospective students of what the minimum score for which a credit is earned and how many credits are earned. To receive credit, a student must request that the College Board send an official AP score report to the college either at the time of testing or afterward through a score report request. At institutions of higher learning in the state of Washington, the minimum score needed to earn credit can vary by program within an institution. For instance, the minimum score required in Biology is a four in order to get ten credits at the University of Washington. However, the minimum score in Art History is four in order to get five credits at the same institution.

Summary: The institutions of higher education are directed to establish a policy for granting as many undergraduate college credits to students who have earned minimum scores of three on AP exams as possible and appropriate. The institutions of higher education are directed to

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conduct biennial reviews of their AP policy and report noncompliance annually beginning November 1, 2019.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0	
House	71	26	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2017